

REMARKS

In the Office Action, claims 1-6, 9-13, 15-19, 22-26, 29-33 and 35-39 were rejected and claims 7, 8, 14, 20-21, 27-28, 34 and 40-42 were objected to as being dependent upon rejected base claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that these claims would be allowable if written in independent form. By the present Response, claims 1, 3, 6, 8-9, 24, 26, 28-29, 36 and 41 are amended and claims 2, 5, 25, 27 and 38-40 are cancelled. Upon entry of the amendments, claims 1, 3-4, 6-24, 26, 28-37 and 41-42 will remain pending in the present patent application.

Applicants respectfully assert that the present application is in condition for allowance. The amendments to independent claims 1, 24 and 36 recite features of previously dependent claims that the Examiner indicated as allowable.

Specifically, the Examiner indicated that the previously dependent claim 7 would be allowable if written in independent form. Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitation of claim 7 and any intervening claims. Claim 2, 5 and 7 have been cancelled, and claims 3, 8 and 9 have been amended to correct their dependencies. Claim 1 and its remaining dependent claims are therefore in condition for allowance.

The Examiner indicated that the previously dependent claim 27 would be allowable if written in independent form. Claim 24 has been amended to include the recitation of claim 27 and any intervening claims. Claim 25 and 27 have been cancelled, and claims 26 and 28-29 have been amended to correct their dependencies. Claim 24 and its remaining dependent claims are therefore in condition for allowance.

The Examiner indicated that the previously dependent claim 40 would be allowable if written in independent form. Claim 36 has been amended to include the recitation of claim 40 and any intervening claims. Claim 38-40 have been cancelled, and

claim 41 has been amended to correct its dependency. Claim 36 and its remaining dependent claims are therefore in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the remarks and amendments set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If the Examiner believes that a telephonic interview will help speed this application toward issuance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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